Computerisation of land records

435. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assessment has been made by Government with regard to the non-utilisation of Central funds allocated to the State Governments and Union Territories for Centrally sponsored scheme of computerisation of land records;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons attributed for the non-utilisation of funds by the defaulting State Governments/Union Territories and whether the funds have been diverted to other programmes; and

(d) the steps being taken and contemplated by Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BABAGOUDA PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. A mid-term assessment of utilisation of funds under the programme of computerisation of land records was made in August, 1998 for using such figures in the conference of Revenue Minister's held on 17th September, 1998. Thereafter, regular contacts are being made with State Governments to pursue further utilisation of unspent balance to facilitate further release of funds in the current financial year. So far, under the scheme, funds have been mainly released for two sets of activities:—

(i) Data-capture through the district level offices, in addition to some other activities including preparation of sites, purchase of consumables etc., but major expenditures regarding supply of hardware, software, training and maintenance of equipments are borne by the NIC; and

(ii) For operationalisation of the scheme in the Tehsil/Taluka/Block/Mandal level, funds are being allocated through the State Governments for purchase of hardware, software, paripherals, consumables for generating necessary services to the people. This activity, has started only during the last financial year.

Under both the activities, so far State Governments have been sanctioned Rs. 84.62 crores and a cumulative utilisation received in appropriate form amounts to Rs. 22.46 crores. However, since the scheme is being implemented at the district and below level, some expenditure which is actually incurred requires timely collection, compilation and preparation of utilisation certificates by the State Governments. Therefore, the actual utilisation is more than the what has been reported through the utilisation certificates.

(c) and (d) The reasons for non-utilisation i.e. delay in utilisation of sanctioned funds include:

(i) inclusion of the sanctioned funds in the State Budget;

(ii) delay made by the State Finance departments in releasing the funds to the implementing agencies;

(iii) data capture being a very slow process and resultantly the utilisation of funds for data capture has been naturally slow;

(iv) Though direction has been sent to use private vendors for data capture on pro-data basis, availability of such vendous in interior districts is not easy. Hence, the State Governments could not expedite the data capture and utilise those funds which were placed with the district authorities for data capture. No diversion of funds by the implementing agencies has been reported so far.